

‘I Will Fight’: Norm Pattis Is Standing by a Man Accused of Murder

Outspoken New Haven attorney Norm Pattis is representing Fotis Dulos, charged in the murder of his wife. The case has received local and international attention, leaving Pattis to juggle a defense under the public eye.

By Robert Storace

“You have not seen the half of it [evidence],” the Pattis & Smith partner said. “We will win. We have a strong case.”



Attorney Norm Pattis

Known for his blunt talk, fierce advocacy and controversial clients, New Haven attorney Norm Pattis is no stranger to infamy.

Fellow attorneys follow his cases. And love him or hate him, the firebrand is one of Connecticut’s best-known attorneys.

But among his clients: a man accused of murder, and one being sued for pushing a conspiracy theory about a mass shooting at an elementary school. The men are at once high-profile and unpopular figures: Alex Jones, who Sandy Hook families are suing for defamation, and Fotis Dulos, arrested this week on suspicion of murdering his missing wife, the mother of five children.

Pattis was in Austin, Texas, Friday to meet with Jones. But the lawyer says the press has bombarded him with questions about the Connecticut murder case. His client was charged Tuesday with the murder of his wife, Jennifer, who disappeared May 24.

Dulos posted a \$6 million bond two days later.

Within hours, by Friday morning, Pattis said he fielded no less than 15 media calls, requesting interviews on Dulos. And he often obliges, saying he has a message for the media, law enforcement and the public.

“You have not seen the half of it [evidence],” the Pattis & Smith partner said. “We will win. We have a strong case.”

Prosecutors have also charged two other people with conspiracy to commit murder: Fotis Dulos’ former girlfriend, Michelle Troconis, and his friend, attorney Kent Mawhinney.

But Pattis argues the state arrested Dulos on circumstantial evidence.

“I will not stand idly by and see my client sacrificed and maligned,” he said. “I will fight fire with fire.”

His strategy moving forward: “master the evidence the state has, and to see whether it supports their theory and to develop alternative theories consistent with his innocence,” Pattis said.

In other words, focus on shifting suspicion, but raising arguments that someone other than her husband is responsible for Jennifer Dulos’ disappearance.

“If she is a victim of foul play, it’s at the hands of someone else,” Pattis said.

Richard Colangelo Jr., the state’s attorney for the Stamford/Norwalk Judicial District where the case will be tried, did not respond to a request for comment Friday.

PUBLIC EYE

Meanwhile, Pattis said he’s “disappointed” with how prosecutors and law enforcement officials have handled the case.

“They locked on to Mr. Dulos from day one,” Pattis said. “They changed their motive. First, it was about divorce, and now they are claiming he had a financial

crisis. His financial situation is not as bad as people have suggested. It’s actually quite good.”

What’s not good for the defense: the constant news coverage.

“There is a saying that there is never too much media publicity for an attorney. I’m not sure about that in this case,” Pattis said. “It’s been awkward and embarrassing.”

But despite the publicity, the attorney thinks Dulos can get a fair trial in Connecticut.

Picking a jury just might take a little longer, he said.

Until then, Pattis said he and his legal team speak to Dulos, who is now under house arrest, several times a day.

“I’ll see to it that he has a fair trial,” Pattis said. “It takes patience sometimes. My theory is you do not need jury consultants. But rather, when you look at a juror, do they listen and resonate and respond to you?” ■